The Seed Sower.

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Your Pearls.

Trust not the secret of thy soul with those
Who hold their treasures with a reckless hand;
Nor to each ready ear thy thoughts disclose,
Nor to each smiling face thy heart expand.

Pearls from the ocean depths too precious are
To be strewn, heedless, at the common feet;
Show not to curious eyes the hidden scar,
Nor to the winds thy sacred words repeat.

It is the lesson taught each separate heart,
To shield its gems from universal gaze:
To shine in quiet glory, and apart,
Revealed alone upon its sacred days.

Else, under trampling hoofs thy gold shall lie,
The holy gold of thy interior self:
Crushed the rare pearls by every passer by,
Or given from hand to hand as vulgar pelf.

Give freely to the world its just demand
Of sympathy, of kindliness, of trust;
But keep reserved for one beloved band
The pearls, too pure to be trod down in dust!

All lives may know thy gentleness and grace,
All hearts thy loving power may evidence,
But on few hands—oft one alone—dare place
The costly ring of priceless confidence!

Torquay. E. B. RUSSELL.

Organisation.

The proposition, "We ought to organise," provokes the questions, "Who are *we?*" and "What is meant by organisation?"

This particular *we* is a peculiar pronoun; like the *we* royal and the *we* editorial it has its own implications, but they are of a much more subtle kind. Let it be termed the *we* indeterminate. If you multiply a Unitarian by fifty the product is not fifty Unitarians, but a *we* of fifty-man strength. Some of us, it is true, are willing to speak about a Unitarian Church; but these would define the adjective in such a way as to exclude any specific theological meaning. Most of us, believing that the word is still generally understood in a theological sense, prefer, whenever we speak of our loosely-knit community, to avoid it, and to make use of an unqualified pronoun.

It is evident, then, that our unwillingness to describe ourselves collectively in terms of opinion is something more characteristic than are our opinions themselves. When loyalty to this principle conflicts with loyalty to our theology, it is the principle, and not the theology, which prevails. Our basis of union is not the accidental or secondary fact that we agree in certain opinions, but our deeper and more essential agreement in the rule by which

opinion should be formed. We hold that a man ought to believe that which, in the diligent use of all his truth-seeking powers, seems to him to be true, and ought to profess, as exactly as his command of language will allow, that and that only which he believes.

It is impossible to hold this principle without perceiving that its general acceptance is necessary to the world's welfare. By no other means can peace be established amid the warring sects, and the largest measure of truth be attained in religion. On this ground alone it would be our duty to further the principle with all our heart and soul. But the necessity which is laid upon us is even more urgent, for if we neglect this duty there is no other to perform it. We are the only philalethians, the only lovers of truth as such, in the religious world. All other denominations are organised upon the basis of some predetermined theological opinion. They love truth only on condition that truth will consent to harmonise with their formularies. The task of leading mankind into the way of truth and peace is peculiarly and inalienably our task.

What, we are next to inquire, is meant by organisation? A hint may be gained from etymology. An organon, in the Greek use of the term, was simply a machine—a device by which small power could be enabled to do great work, and great power to do greater work. The Greeks of Aristotle's age perceived that such devices were possible in the realm of mind as well as in the realm of matter, and the great logical scheme of the Peripatetics—a machine for determining truth—was called the Organon. In later days Bacon applied the term to his own reform of scientific method. He called it the new machine, Novum Organum. In our own age we distinguish between the merely mechanical and the truly organic. An organ is a machine which is alive; which is part, that is to say, of an organism; and the organism as a whole has the power of working itself and repairing itself. Yet one step more: science has begun to speak about "the social organism;" she has discovered that a society of mankind is just such a living machine, made up of many parts, and exercising a collective life. But in this last stage there enters an important difference. The machine is not only alive as a whole; it is made up of intelligent units, who are able, in a very large degree, to determine what kind of machine the organism shall be, and what kind of work it shall do. Now, organisation is nothing else but the creation or nurture of a social organism, a living machine made up of living parts, to do a definite work.

The proposition, "We ought to organise," may now be paraphrased as follows:—Those who hold the principle that loyalty to truth, rather than persistence in opinion, should guide religious thought are in duty bound to do all they can to impress this principle upon mankind; and to that end they must take the most natural and most effective means, which is to unite themselves in a living machine whose work shall be to promulgate this principle.

The task of fulfilling this duty has already been begun. In the National Conference we have such a living machine. It is imperfect, even rudimentary, as yet: but it possesses continuous life; its church roll realises a corporate unity; its assemblies, committees and sub-committees are limbs that work, and can already point to worthy results of their efforts. It behoves us now to complete what we have begun, by making the National Conference as effective a machine for our grand purpose as it lies in our power to make it. The lines of progress are obvious. They continue those along which we have already come. Those inspiring assemblies, to which more than anything else we owe our sense of membership one of another, must be made annual. Why, in all conscience, should two years out of every three be deprived of this great aid to God's work for man? The powers of the committee must be enlarged. The treasurer's fund must be abundantly increased. If this work is worth doing at all, ought it not to be done as thoroughly as our energy, intellect, and wealth can do it?

Some of the usual arguments against organisation are so clearly fallacious that their real force is doubtless to be sought in some secret, underlying sentiment rather than in their own content. "You are converting a deliberative into an executive body." What then? Observe, the body does not cease to be deliberative. It retains its brain and its tongue; it gains a hand. Is that self-evidently a misfortune? If not, let reason be shewn for so regarding it. Again, "Life must first shew itself in the individual, then in the congregation, last in the collective church. To attempt

to establish a church is to reverse the natural order." To find any force in this argument we are obliged to assume that our men and women, or at least our several congregations, are spiritually dead. Perhaps there is an underthought to the effect that so long as a congregation is weak it ought not to unite with others, but rather to concentrate its efforts on increasing its own strength. But how could these efforts be hampered, how could they fail to be invigorated, by the sense of membership in a great community? And is there no possibility of effective aid to come to that congregation from those with which it unites?

It is sometimes suggested that the invigoration of Conference would inflict some kind of injury upon the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. It is, however, false wisdom to refrain from any good and necessary work for fear of diverting attention, or even subscriptions, from some other good work; and in this case the fear is illusory. So long as the Unitarian Association works under the guidance of our great principle—and so long only are we concerned in its success—it will surely be helped, and not harmed, by the growth of a strong, united church, to which that principle shall be a bond and covenant. But if these two societies are really incompatible, which better deserves our service,—a union of individuals to preach Unitarianism or a community of congregations to teach the gospel of truth?

Of all objections to what is proposed the most futile is that which professes to plead for the district associations. Take your own district association, no matter which it be. Examine it. There are members, officers, rules, a programme of work—all the dry bones that make up a complete skeleton. What is amiss? The dry bones lack life. The flesh is emaciated, the spine willowy, the veins anæmic. This is their state in isolation. But join them in a great church, and you drench them in a flood of life. The love of truth which casts out all fear is a vital force, which, when it flows in its own proper channel, through masses of men held together in comradeship, has power to quicken even our listless local societies. Is there any among us who has ever known that force, but bears witness to its power? Why should you rather believe the mere guesswork of those who have never known it?

Lastly, there are some who take higher ground. They declare that a church organisation must always be a peril to freedom. In history all assaults upon freedom of conscience can be traced to a distrust of God's self-revelation, and an attempt to limit inquiry by premature definition. If we found a church upon the directly opposite principle, she will offer no menace to freedom, but a glorious safeguard. Our love of freedom depends upon our love of truth. It is because we would be guided aright that we drive no nails into the compass, but allow the Polar needle to waver and tremble at its own longing. The short way to cramp our freedom is to blunt our love of truth; and the short way to blunt that, or any other faculty, is to forbid it its natural expression.

Organisation is necessary to our intellectual life. The exponents of such a principle as ours ought to be in the forefront of theology—the keenest, sanest critics, the pioneers of spiritual discovery, the most helpful comforters of the soul with freight from the voyages of mind. To attain all this the mere elemental impulse is not enough; it must be equipped. Books, teaching, intercourse, co-operation, are needed, and they must radiate from a central point. The work of Manchester College must be magnified, glorified, extended. The work of building up a great school of philalethian divines is an urgent work, and it is our work, and only by organisation can it be performed.

And most important of all, by neglect of this task we impair our spiritual health. It calls us, and we can do it or shirk it, but we cannot disown it. Our message is God's message, the world needs it, and we are sent. Shall we go to the world with it, or content ourselves with muttering it behind our open door? To those who love our quiet seclusion too well, and shrink from the bustle of a larger church life, may be commended these closing words from a thrice famous tract: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat." E. W. Lummis.

What we hope ever to do with ease, we have first to do with diligence.

Loyalty.

(EXTRACTS FROM A CORONATION ADDRESS).

The services and incidents, the excitement and enthusiasm attending the Coronation, the pomp, processions, the ritual of orb, sceptre, anointing, and crown, the popular rejoicings, the thundering guns, the voice of a people's acclamation, all centering on one figure but just returned from the Valley of the Great Shadows—all these things accepted as the sign of a nation's loyalty, set us asking—What do we mean by loyalty in a Demoocratic age? In what does loyalty consist? Why should loyalty win our approval? Why should disloyalty be regarded almost as a crime? What is that inward and spiritual reality of which all this pomp and pageantry are the outward and visible signs? Englishmen have certainly outgrown the Mediæval idea of loyalty as reverence for the Divine Right of Kings. A constitutional monarchy like our own has robbed the particular person occupying the throne of all that halo of sanctity which once seemed to be the ground and reason for loyal regard. And yet we feel that without loyalty our nation would be in a sorry plight, and that any weakening of the sentiment of loyalty would be a distinct loss to the unity and cohesion and power of the State. What then is loyalty for Englishmen of the 20th century?

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Certainly it is no longer slavish obedience to another's will, however exalted that other may be. It never was that in England. Englishmen have resisted their Kings in the past, and would do so again did the occasion arise. The Barons of Runnymede resisted John; the Puritans of the 17th century resisted Charles; and the claims of unquestioning loyalty to a person died out with the flight of James. How different a thing loyalty is for us from what it is where the throne boasts of Divine Right may be seen by imagining that just before the Coronation the Emperor of Germany and the King of England had effected an exchange of souls. Robert Louis Stevenson once pictured, in a most humorous letter, such an exchange of souls between himself and his friend, Cosmo Monkhouse. The transfer is not unthinkable. Suppose that the soul of the Kaiser had replaced the soul of the King, and the soul of the King had been carried off to Germany in the body of the Kaiser. What would be the result? We need not enquire what would happen in Germany if in place of the dæmonic energy and imperious will which marks William II. the Kaiser returned with the spirit which belongs to Edward VII. It is more to the purpose to wonder what would happen if the crown of Edward VII. covered the restless, imperious, despotic will of the German Kaiser. Such a supposition, fantastic as it appears, helps us at once to understand that the loyalty of Englishmen to the throne is something widely different from what loyalty means in Germany. We know perfectly well that the spirit of the Kaiser on the English throne, with all its claims to absolute power, divine right, and unquestioning obedience, would at once provoke a resistance which not even a man like the Kaiser could defy. And the resistance would not be disloyalty. Some of the greatest assertions of loyalty have been made by rebellion. The winning of the Magna Charta was an act of rebellion against a person, prompted by loyalty to the State. For the King had been disloyal. He had undermined the foundations of just government; he had behaved as if his own self-will were the supreme law of the State. The Barons at Runnymede asserted a law which was higher than the will of the King, and to which the King himself must submit. So it was with the Puritans and Charles—they resisted the monarch for the sake of the law. For a long time during the civil war the Parliamentary forces made war against the King in the name of the King. They could not give him up because he was the symbol in the State of the Majesty of the Law. At last Cromwell and his soldiers proclaimed such language to be a fiction. A fiction no doubt it had become. But the endurance of it for so long by men of a particularly stern and vigorous mind showed that it expressed a very deep truth for them. When it had lost reality, and the Monarch and the Law had become absolutely divorced from each other, it was scarcely possible that any result should follow but that which did. Men trained to reverence for law said, "There must be a law which is above the throne itself to which King and people must alike submit."

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Now, then, we see what loyalty means for

Englishmen. It is reverence for the law of which the King is accepted as the symbol. The throne is a personification of the idea of the supremacy of law, and of that obedience to law which is the cement binding the State together. The throne is like the flag—not the reality of power and rule but its emblem. We honour the King as the chief representative of the law which unites us into one people. Loyalty is not peculiar to any one form of government. It may flourish in a Republic as well as in a Monarchy—in a Democratic as well as in an Autocratic State. Under each of these forms loyalty is demanded and must be given. It is true that loyalty seems to be exercised more simply and more directly towards a person than towards a principle, but that is only because the spirituality of an idea is more difficult to take in than the splendour of a crown. But the essence of loyalty is in reverence for law, and for all that law implies, of responsibility, of duty, of the claims of man upon man and of the State upon its members, of the claims of an Everlasting Righteousness in the affairs of men and nations. A Democratic State gives as fine an opportunity for the exercise of loyalty as a Monarchy. Its members must confess the supremacy of law over them, one and all.

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So loyalty for us means reverence for law, love of country, the supremacy of Right in all the relations of life, the willingness to live, or if need be to die, for freedom and just government, the passion for justice in the State. Of all these great spiritual things the throne is accepted as the symbol and the King as the personification. So Tennyson, a loyalist to the bone, could sing with ardour of our "*Crowned Republic.*" It is the sanctity of law above both crown and people which unites them for England in one. Loyalty to the throne suggests for us the spirit which sets justice on high, which inculcates civic courage and social service, which believes that the principles of personal morality are equally binding in national affairs, which refuses to believe that the greed, aggression, boasting, and selfishness which are wrong in the individual can ever be right in the State. Loyalty is the readiness to sacrifice private interests and wishes to the public good; it throws a consecration around the forms and organs of public authority; it enjoins obedience for conscience sake. And in so far as we accept the King as the visible sign of these great things, we do well to give him honour and to multiply the emblems of respect with which we surround and approach him. Think not that as a symbol of law, country, justice, freedom and national life the King's office is less worthy of reverence than in times of personal power. Not so. The office to-day is nobler than arms or birth could give the Kings of old, for it has the nobility of a people's free choice. So when we pray "God save the King," what do we mean but this: "God make the King loyal to the true interests of the land and people he represents; God make all his people, with the King himself, loyal to the Eternal law of Righteousness; God make England a light of freedom and justice to all the world; God grant that the throne may work its subjects lasting good and no ill, so that it may be kept

"Unshaken still,
Broad based upon the people's will,
And compassed by the inviolate sea."

J. W.

"Pensees" Writers.

PART I.

The great Cartesian oracle, "*Cogito ergo sum,*" has been, I believe, regarded as a redundant piece of analysis. Either "*cogito*" or "*sum*" by itself would have sufficed to have established the needful point: there was no "*ergo*" about it. But I have sometimes thought for unphilosophical purposes the oracle would be better for the addition of the word "*homo;*" *cogito ergo homo sum,* or *homo sum ergo cogito.* Both statements would be true. For though a cynic might call in question the truth of the latter statement, he would be the only person who would. We cannot help *being* and we cannot help *thinking,* however little we may *be* and however little we may *think;* and there is in all men, more or less ardent, a thirst for knowledge, a thirst for wisdom, a thirst for truth, and a strong craving to create something; and of all creations the sublimest is mental creation, the building up of works of thought, shaping thought into words, "fitting aptest words to things." And where there is no specific vehicle to convey thought, such as the Lyric, the Drama, the Essay, the Novel, the Fable, the Epistle, or where a given thinker is constitutionally unable to employ any of these vehicles for his

thought, he will none the less put his thoughts into the form of "Pensées," Aphorisms, Apophthegms, Sentences, Proverbs, Maxims, Meditations, Reflexions. He will simply string them together or put them haphazard into a casket. He will weigh or reflect upon all things, such as, to quote Mr. John Morley, "life, manners, society, conduct, human nature, our aims, our ideas, and all besides that is most animated and most interesting in man's busy chase after happiness and wisdom," "how to be, to do, to do without, and to depart." Wisdom for him, as for Coleridge, is "common sense in an uncommon degree." His method is an unsystematised seeking after wisdom—a *philosophy*, love of wisdom, but not a system, a *theology*, thought about God, but not a science. The race of "Pensées" writers perhaps share the "acute sobriety," as Mr. John Morley calls it, of Shaftesbury, one of whose "Pensées" is, that "the most ingenious way of becoming foolish is by a system."

The cover of my edition of Joubert's "Pensées" is scattered over with golden pansies. "There's pansies, that's for thoughts," and golden pansies for golden thoughts—"elect, precious," select, choice, elegant, "oracular gems," to use a phrase of Milton's. It is just possible that the golden pansies may have some slight allusion, also, to the prize of the Golden Violet awarded in the Floral Games at Toulouse, and its romantic associations with Clémence Isaure and Count Raymond of Toulouse, and where Joubert spent much of his early life. "To glance over Joubert's 'Pensées,'" said a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine* of 1852, "is like uncovering a tray of diamonds." It will scarcely be denied, therefore, that we have rich fields, not to say "diamond fields," for investigation and contemplation. "Light," says Joubert, "is the soul of the diamond," and light, we may say, is the soul of these "Pensées." Sometimes, no doubt, the light may in some way be obstructed or obscured, producing a somewhat vague and cloudy aspect, as if reflection had been carried on under difficulties. Such a "Pensée" may be likened rather to the milky irridescence of the opal than to the white light of the diamond. Joubert has himself said, "Fully to understand a grand and beautiful thought requires perhaps as much time as to conceive it." Such a wise word as that is as good as a present to us of a hundred good sermons in the making. If we consider a particular pansy of this type, "a full and fair one," and trace in our own way its growth up to its rich flower, thoughts, pensées enough will be generated to feed the hungry sheep that sometimes look up for *thoughtful* food, as a luxury it may be, as well as for homilies, admonitions, exhortations, and denunciations, human nature's daily food or Sundaily food. It is usual in some difficult quarters to call *thoughtful* sermons *essays*, and condemn the preacher. It is, I am afraid, from the same quarters one hears of direct and plain sermons being either too personal or too political. There remain only the flowery sermons, and as the flowers in these sermons are not "pansies," they, too, are obviously unsatisfactory.

The word pansy, or pensée, Edmund Spencer's Paunce, and Ben Jonson's Paunsé, itself tempts one to a little rumination. It is Heart's-ease and Herb-constancy, and the Trinity Flower. It is a species of the violet. Had it always remained monochrome as well as uniform, it would probably have been called the Unitarian Flower. The violet is, of course, the Latin viola, which brings us to the Greek *ἰόν* and so, I suppose, to that semi-goddess Io, Jupiter's white heifer for whose hunger he created the violets as a divine food for rumination. And the violet was appropriately enough the national flower of Athens. And if we go off at a tangent to ponder the derivation of *pansy*, we are brought into associations of balances, adjustments, weights and weighings, ponderous and weighty things, and a "pensée" becomes a com*pend*ious form of many ponderings and weighings of things, the com*pend*ium of a thousand *pen*sive hours—hours of thought, and endeavours after wisdom and happiness, *i.e.*, endeavours after true Life, as in the case of Pascal above all, after the Christian Life. The essence of a "pensée," taking this as a generic name, says Mr. John Morley, in his excellent address on "Aphorisms," "is the compression of a mass of thought and observation into a single saying." Cicero, he says, calls them "Saltpits," because, according to Bacon, you may extract salt out of them and sprinkle it where you will. And as gardeners, by a wise restraint and ruthless nipping of puny and unpromising pansies, produce their "full and fair

ones," so the cultivators of "pensées," by similar restraint, rejection, pruning, produce their thought-compelling specimens of thought. The masters of this special art are *facile principes* the French, of whom I will mention some and dwell on one or two, inviting you to consider the pansies, how they grow, the direct result in many cases, no doubt, of toiling and spinning. Inspiration, of course, here, as everywhere else, bears off the easy palm, and men in their diviner moments, carried out of themselves as in a chariot of fire, whom God has translated, can then only most convincingly translate, interpret God and life to men. Other thoughts are not to be despised because of self-evident shaping and chiselling, far-fetched or much laboured—for is it not the characteristic of genius to be far-fetched and much worked upon, and none the less admired and valued? The quaint lines quoted by Dr. John Brown in quite another connection are not perhaps altogether inappropriate here—

"Them what is rich, them rides in chaises,
Them what is poor, them walks like blazes."

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No doubt for most people the pre-eminent "Pensées" writer is Pascal. Pascal's "Pensées" is almost as much a household expression as his *Provincial Letters*, a classical title, now appropriated by that distinguished and world-famous journal, *The Inquirer*. Associated with him by similarity in the title of his work is Joubert. It is specifically cited as Joubert's "Pensées." But though other words like Maximes, Réflexions, Journal, Aphorismes, etc., are used as the titles for the works of other writers, they belong all practically to the same category of literature. There are the two celebrated noblemen, Le Duc de la Rochefoucauld and Le Marquis de Vauvenargues. *The Réflections et Maximes* (1746) of Vauvenargues are largely the antidote to the *Maximes* (1665-1678) of La Rochefoucauld. The glory which La Rochefoucauld sought but failed to find by the sword he distinctly achieved by his pen. Perhaps it is scarcely just to say that Vauvenargues furnishes the antidote to La Rochefoucauld without first allowing that La Rochefoucauld supplies certain significant statements of his own antidote. His fundamental and well-known principle is that self-love and self-interest are the ruling motives of human conduct. "Our virtues," so runs his maxim, "are oftenest only our vices disguised." But this statement can hardly express a deep-seated conviction, seeing that he is also the author of the saying that "Hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue." We ought also to recollect that his bitterest enemy was Cardinal Richelieu, and it may well be that in holding the mirror up to contemporary ideas of virtue and morality, as exhibited in Richelieu's surroundings, he has not wilfully but indirectly "blackened humanity." He began at fifty years of age to compose his maxims in rather a playful spirit, and for the entertainment and edification of the salon of Mme. de Sablé and her *Précieuses*, her bevy of dainty dames of high degree who had already begun the game of maxim-making themselves, "a sort of," as the Lord Chancellor would say, "a sort of superior spelling-bee" or "Book Tea." M. Petit de Julleville offers the very probable suggestion that La Rochefoucauld threw down his egoistic maxim as a challenge and glaring paradox. A deeper conviction, he maintains, would have expressed itself less audaciously, and he adds, what is, after all, pretty final in these matters, that La Rochefoucauld was better than his maxims. "This great theorist of egoism," as he describes him, "had the happiness to be the object of the deepest and sincerest friendships of life-long duration." Vauvenargues, however, who died at the early age of thirty-two, presents (not of set purpose perhaps, but by the native temperament of his own mind) the other side to La Rochefoucauld's *Maximes* in his own *Réflexions et Maximes*. He was "one of the most lovable souls of the century," says Petit de Julleville: "other writers of that time," he says, "have a certain indefinable acidity in a corner of their mind which disillusions the reader; Vauvenargues, on the other hand, always allures and holds his reader by the glow of his soul." "His works, impregnated with stoicism and spirituality, found little welcome in an age characterised by epicureanism and scepticism. Moreover," adds Petit de Julleville, with fine sarcasm, "there was no contradiction between his teaching and his practice, a circumstance which makes the following of certain other notable teachers (such as Rousseau) easy to the least pure of his disciples. Of all preachers of virtue, the least inconvenient to his hearers is he who preaches without practising." Mr. John Morley dwells lovingly upon Vauvenargues' works in one of

his critical essays. He speaks of him as "grave and not seldom profoundly weighty, delicate without being weak, and subtle without obscurity." He says "he was one of the most tender, lofty, cheerful, and delicately sober of all moralists." It is not easy to judge a building by a single brick, but one may judge of a collection of diamonds by one or two specimens. I take a few of Vauvenargues' "Pensées" at random, in lieu of dwelling any further upon the man himself. "Those who despise man," he says, "are not great men." "Solitude is to the mind what diet is to the body." "Love is not so sensitive as self-love." "How unavailing is good advice if our own experience teaches us so little." "The things we know the best are those that we have never learnt." "Pity is less tender than love." "The beauty of virtue is evident from this fact, that bad people practice it from self-interest." "Weak people sometimes think themselves to be wicked, whereas wicked people wish to be thought good." "We discover in ourselves what others conceal from us, and we perceive in others what we conceal from ourselves; we ought to combine the two studies." "Patience is the art of hoping." "He is not born for glory who knows not the value of time." "Men must be allowed to make great mistakes against themselves, so as to avoid a far greater ill—servitude." "Young people suffer less from their own faults than from the prudence of their elders." "The counsels of old age give light, but not warmth, like the sun in winter." "Bad people are always surprised to find that good people have any common sense." "Great men undertake great things because they are great things, and little men because they think them easy." "It is sometimes easier to form a new party than to come by degrees to be the head of a party already formed." "Obscurity is the realm of error." "It is a great sign of mediocrity to bestow always moderate praise." "Before attacking an abuse we ought to see whether we can destroy its foundations." "We cannot be just without being humane." "The maxims of men reveal their heart." "Few maxims are true in every respect." "Great thoughts come from the heart."

E. L. H. THOMAS.

Every man has as much of God as he wants.

The Foolish Harebell.

A harebell hung its wilful head:
"I am so tired, so tried! I wish I was dead."

She hung her head in the mossy dell:
"If all were over, then all were well!"

The wind he heard, and was pitiful;
He moved her about to make her cool.

"Wind, you are rough," said the dainty bell;
"Leave me alone—I am not well."

And the wind at the voice of the drooping dame
Sank in his heart, and ceased for shame.

"I am hot, so hot!" she sighed and said;
"I am withering up; I wish I was dead."

Then the sun he pitied her pitiful case,
And drew a thick veil over his face.

"Cloud, go away, and don't be rude;
I am not—I don't see why you should."

The cloud withdrew, and the harebell cried:
"I am faint, so faint! and no water beside!"

And the dew came down its million-fold path;
But she murmured, "I did not want a bath!"

A boy came by in the morning grey;
He plucked the harebell, and threw it away.

The harebell shivered, and cried, "Oh! oh!
I am faint, so faint! Come, dear wind, blow."

The wind blew softly, and did not speak;
She thanked him kindly, but grew more weak.

"Sun, dear sun, I am cold," she said.
He rose; but lower she drooped her head.

"O rain, I am withering; all the blue
Is fading out of me;—come, please do."

The rain came down as fast as it could,
But for all its will it did her no good.

She shuddered and shrivelled, and moaning said,
"Thank you all kindly;" and then she was dead.

Let us hope, let us hope, when she comes next year,
She'll be simple and sweet. But I fear, I fear!

GEORGE MACDONALD.

The Seed Sower.

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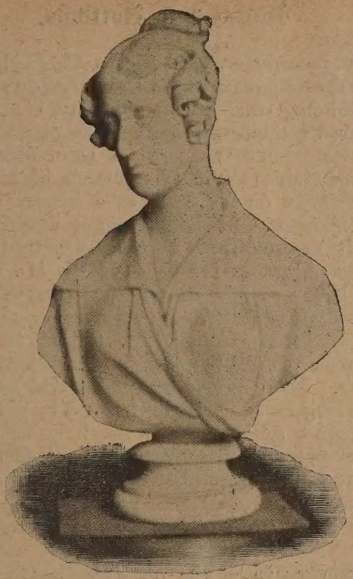

Mary Somerville.

"AN HONOUR TO WOMANHOOD."

[Daughter of Sir William Fairfax. Born Jedburgh 1780. In 1804 married Captain Sveig, who died 1807. Married Dr. William Somerville, her cousin, 1812. Edinburgh, 1812-1816. London, 1816-1838. Italy, 1838 to her death. Died, Naples, 1872. Wrote *Mechanism of the Heavens*, *Connection of the Physical Sciences*, *Physical Geography*, *Molecular and Microscopic Science*, and other works.]

Amongst the famous women of the world who have been an honour to womanhood, and a power for general good, one of the most remarkable was, assuredly, Mary Somerville. Great as was her intellectual ardour, still greater was her beautiful character, so that those who may not be drawn to her scientific writing may yet love her for herself alone.

Although she was already twenty at the beginning of last century, she lived to be ninety-two, and died only thirty years ago. There are many living, therefore, who remember her: let one good woman speak of another. Says Miss Frances Power Cobbe enthusiastically in her delightful autobiography: "By far the best and dearest of my friends in Florence was one who was already then an aged woman—Mrs. Somerville. I had brought a letter of introduction to her, being anxious to see one who had been such an honour to womanhood; but I expected to find her an incarnation of science, having very little affinity with such a person as I. Instead of this, I found in her the dearest old lady in all the world, who took me to her heart as if I had been a newly-found daughter, and for whom I soon felt such tender affection that, sitting beside her on her sofa, I could hardly keep myself from caressing her. She was the very ideal of an old lady, so gentle, cordial, and dignified, like my mother; and as fresh, eager, and intelligent *then* as she can ever have been. Her religious ideas proved to be exactly like my own; and being no doubt somewhat athirst for sympathy on a subject on which she felt profoundly, she opened her heart to me entirely."

There ensued a close correspondence between these kindred souls and the frequent interchange of gifts. Miss Cobbe sent her a volume of Theodore Parker's Prayers, for which she was thanked with tears in her eyes, saying she had found them the greatest comfort and the most perfect expression of religious feeling of any prayers she had known. Another time she sent her *Hopes of the Human Race*, and received this benediction in acknowledgment: "God bless you, dearest friend, for your irresistible argument for our immortality! Not that I ever doubted of it, but, as I shall soon enter my ninety-third year, your words are an inexpressible comfort." No wonder that Miss Cobbe should not be the only one to maintain that Mary Somerville was the living refutation of all the idle, foolish things which have been said about intellectual women. "There never existed a more womanly woman."

After looking at this sympathetic picture we feel to need little more. But the few details that may be filled in should deepen and not confuse the impression.

Good birth on both sides, an inherited cleverness, a wild life outdoor with Nature, an early passion for Shakespeare, a self-education in Greek and Latin, led up to a distinct mathematic and scientific bent, which was interrupted in its pursuit by the domestic duties of marriage. These she appears to have performed with success, being an excellent housewife, a good cook, skilful with her needle, a loving wife, and a devoted mother to the two boys who were born to her.

Left a widow at twenty-seven, she returned to her father's home, took up her studies again in leisure time, and amidst much disapprobation, but found a warm sympathiser in her cousin William, and married him in due time. It was a marriage of true minds admitting no impediments, and it extended over nearly fifty years—a most touching instance of united old age.

Her first book, written at the instigation of Lord Brougham, was called *The Mechanism of the Heavens*, and raised her at once into a foremost place in the world of science. Honours poured in apace. She was elected an honorary member of several learned societies, and her bust, by Chantrey, of which the above is a copy, was placed in the hall of the Royal Society. In 1835 a civil pension of £200 a year was conferred upon her, and afterwards raised to £300 in recognition of her services to science. Other works followed at intervals, and a treatise on *The Theory of Differences* occupied her very last hours.

One of the latest entries in her journal runs: "The Blue Peter (she was an admiral's daughter) has been long flying at my foremast, and now that I am in my ninety-second year I must soon expect the signal for sailing. It is a solemn voyage, but it does not disturb my tranquillity. Deeply sensible of my utter unworthiness, and profoundly grateful for the innumerable blessings I have received, I trust in the infinite mercy of my Almighty Creator." And this is her final entry: "I am perfectly happy."

She died at Naples, and was buried in the English Cemetery, where a noble monument, erected by her daughter, represents her reclining on a classic chair. She ought to have been laid in Westminster Abbey.

Her name is commemorated in the library of Girton College, Cambridge, to which she bequeathed her books, and where there is a cast of the Chantrey bust; in the foundation of Somerville Hall, Oxford; and in the Mary Somerville Scholarships for Mathematics. But she herself still lives as one who, in her promotion of the higher education of women, in her teaching of kindness to the dumb creation, in her deep and reverent religious feeling, in every action and word, was an honour to her womanhood; one who did justly, loved mercy, and walked humbly with God.

FRANK K. FREESTON.

Notes and Jottings.

An immediate sequel to the Coronation has been the resignation of the Dean of Westminster. Considering Dr. Bradley's great age, it has been received without surprise, but the regret is very genuine. Since the death of Dean Stanley he has maintained the great traditions of his office with simple dignity, both as a scholar and an administrator. At the moment of writing nothing is known about his successor, though the tongue of rumour is busy. Possibly Mr. Balfour may have a surprise in store in his first and most interesting ecclesiastical appointment, as when Mr. Gladstone brought Dr. Church from the seclusion of Whatley and installed him at St. Paul's. Many people will regret that Dr. Gore is no longer eligible, for his removal to Worcester has been a serious loss to the influence of the Abbey pulpit upon national life. A short time ago no one else seemed so clearly marked out for the position.

The decision of the Wesleyan Conference in regard to the case of Dr. Agur Beet is, on the whole, to be welcomed. It is undoubtedly illogical and inconsistent; but that is generally the way of the world, especially in religious matters. Possibly a few people hoped that things might be pushed to extremes, and lead to the definite separation of advancing thought from the older orthodoxy. The occasion was in reality too trivial for such a dramatic ending. The very nebulous character of Dr. Beet's heresy made it impossible, even if it had been desired. Universalism *versus* Eternal Punishment is an opposition which goes to the roots of the religious life, and it is one which will have to be faced sooner or later in the Methodist community. But evidently its day is not yet. There was startling evidence in the recent debates of the important place which belief in hell fire still occupies in Methodist thought and preaching. When the citadel is stormed it must be under a more daring and intrepid leader than Dr. Beet. It would have been a matter for deep regret if any irreconcilable discord had been allowed to arise over opinions too various and ill-defined to attract either religious earnestness or intellectual enthusiasm.

There are, of course, other questions of consistency and veracity involved in a controversy of this kind which it would be wrong to overlook or even to regard as of secondary importance. We have no right to judge our neighbour in these matters. We cannot see through his eyes. We do not approach the Truth in precisely the same way. To his own Master he stands or falls. But speaking in more general terms, we say with absolute confidence that any Church which is content to make peace at the price of insincere compromise is bound to decline in spiritual power and religious effectiveness. Men could see this more clearly than they do were it not for their fatal habit of confusing two things which are entirely distinct, viz., popular success and religious vitality.

Under the familiar initials, "F. P. C.," a letter appeared recently in the *Westminster Gazette* calling attention to some of the serious considerations involved both in the case of Dr. Beet and the severe strictures which have been passed upon Canon Cheyne. Our official teachers of religion, it is pointed out, are in a position morally equivocal just as they happen to be mentally enlightened. "Is it not time," the writer asks, "for us as a nation to recognise the cruel *impasse* in which this blunder and short-sightedness of our forefathers has placed the most enlightened and honest men in our churches? Professorships of astronomy, geology, or (profane) history bound over to teach for ever their sciences at the point attained three or four hundred years ago would be the laughing-stock of mankind. Is it only *theology* which must be kept (per force of endowments on one hand and persecutions on the other) at a perpetual standstill? Great difficulties beset every way out of the *impasse*, but the worst of them is not so bad as the resolution to maintain it to the ruin of the honesty of our spiritual guides."

The accounts of the suppression of the unauthorised girls' schools in France are unpleasant reading. Paris has been in a state of turmoil, with rival factions each claiming to speak in the name of liberty. In some of the country districts feeling has run high, and there has been a large display of force on the part of the Government. Especially in Brittany there have been scenes of wild disorder, where the peasantry is on the side of the nuns. The Breton peasant is, however, quite distinct both in racial characteristics and religious feeling from the average Frenchman. Nowhere else in Europe, with the exception of Ireland, is Catholic piety so simple and fervent. It is the spirit described by Renan with such exquisite grace in the recollections of his own childhood, which has been roused to fierce anger against the indignity and sacrilege of the Government policy.

Whether M. Combes is wise, even from his own point of view, to push things to extremes, is a question to which it is very difficult to give an answer. Undoubtedly he has the law on his side, and he is simply continuing the anti-clerical policy in education, which has for long had the support of many of the best minds in France, but unfortunately he himself is an ex-priest and not free from the suspicion—at least among his opponents—of anti-clerical rancour. It has always been a dangerous experiment in a country like France to enter the lists openly against the Catholic Church. The cry of persecution is an effective answer to violence, and reaction, which often sets in with startling rapidity, may carry with it political consequences highly dangerous to the Republic. We do not say that this is likely to be the case, for, on the whole, the dramatic scenes which have been described in the English newspapers give very little insight into the thought of the ordinary French citizen; but it is in this direction that some of the most significant results of the present agitation may be looked for. Exasperated religious feeling is a political force which seldom spends itself without working some far-reaching change in human affairs.

Healing by Oxygen.

It is somewhat humiliating to our pride of civilisation to observe in how many cases we have been indebted to uncivilised peoples for very valuable knowledge bearing directly on life and health. A very conspicuous illustration of this is afforded in an entirely new system of healing wounds which has lately been attracting a good deal of attention, and which

certainly appears to have achieved some very remarkable results.

This new system is known as the oxygen treatment, and appears to have been suggested by a practice of the Zulus. During the Zulu war it was observed that these dusky warriors were accustomed to carry their wounded as far as they could up the nearest mountain as a means of facilitating recovery. They, of course, knew nothing about the science of the matter; all they knew was that it was the immemorial practice of their tribe, and that as a matter of fact a wound healed sooner high up on a mountain side than it did on the plains below. That was the experience of the Zulus; and in the light of the teaching of recent bacteriological science, it looked to be not at all improbable that it should be so.

Modern science has shown that in all surgical matters micro-organisms play an all-important part. Wherever there are wounds or sores, living things, microscopically small and amazingly numerous, soon begin to show themselves; and, under certain very common conditions, they bring about inflammatory and putrefactive complications. Lord Lister's great discovery consisted in the recognition of the troublesome action of these micro-organisms, and in the devising of means of getting rid of them. They are constantly present in the atmosphere, and wherever there is a wound or a sore exposed they are ready to fasten on it. Lord Lister discovered this, and he devised the "anti-septic treatment" of wounds as a means of keeping out these mischievous agents. Only exclude these troublesome disturbers from a wound made by the surgeon's knife, and, generally speaking, the healthy forces of nature will heal that wound quickly and easily. The truth of this theory and the splendid practical success that has attended its adoption are known to all the world.

Experiments in the oxygen treatment of wounds have, however, suggested some modifications of the theory upon which Lord Lister has based his great and beneficent revolution in surgical practice. "Listerism," as it is conveniently called, assumes that all micro-organisms in wounds are bad, and that success in healing depends very greatly on their being destroyed altogether. According to the newer theory this is not quite true. There are good bacteria as well as bad. Just as there are good fairies and bad, just as in the world around us there are moral influences that corrupt and deteriorate and destroy, while there are others whose tendency is all to purify and strengthen and improve, so, it seems, in this tiny physical world of micro-organisms there are some that work for death and destruction and others for life and health. And just as in the universe at large there is a spirit of goodness, a power that makes for righteousness, discouraging and suppressing the bad and helping and fostering the good, so it is said to have been found that oxygen-gas kills out these mischievous and destructive micro-organisms — *Streptococci*, *Bacillus fluorescens*, *Bacillus fœtidus*, rod bacteria, and so on, as bacteriologists have learned to call them—while it invigorates and encourages the growth and development of those that tend to build sound and healthy flesh—such as *Staphylococcus albus*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Staphylococcus citreus*.

It does not, it will be seen, come into conflict with Lord Lister's teaching, or in any way detract from his splendid discovery; it supplements and develops it. It is true, as he assumes, that Nature is the great healer; it is true, as he said, that the difficulty of healing very commonly arises from the intrusion of mischievous micro-organisms; and it is quite true that by excluding and destroying these organisms by the "antiseptic treatment"—the anti-putrefactive treatment, that is to say—the natural process of healing is immensely facilitated. The oxygen treatment is a method of warding off the corruptive power of these pernicious bacteria. What the Zulu practice appears to show, and what recent experiments are said very powerfully to confirm, is that the best of all antiseptics is to be found in pure air and plenty of oxygen. They not only kill out mischievous living organisms, but at the same time actually foster and encourage others that are working for the repair of the injury. To supply pure air and oxygen by artificial means, and thus to give Nature the best possible opportunity of doing her beneficent work of healing, is the object of the new system.

Nothing can be much simpler than the system pursued in dealing with wounds, ulcers, burns, scalds, eczema, lesions, and other injuries and affections of legs and arms and hands, backs and heads and faces, eyes and ears and noses. We will suppose that a patient has an ulcerated leg. The limb is merely washed in warm water and laid in a box with

a glass side to it, permitting of its being examined from time to time without disturbance, enclosure being effected by means of an elastic covering fitting over the end of the box and round the leg of the patient. Into this glass-sided receptacle a mixture of oxygen gas and air that has been purified by passing through lime-water and Condy's fluid is now gently poured from a mackintosh gas-bag fitted with taps and tubes. That is practically the whole business. There are minor details of management and some variations of treatment that experience has suggested and that circumstances necessitate—a wound may be on the head, and a specially-devised cap will be substituted for the box; or extensive wounds or sores may be on the trunk, and then a sort of jacket will be requisite. But whatever the details may be, the essential matter is that the flesh to be healed shall be exposed to a mixture of pure air and oxygen in proportions depending on the nature of the affection to be dealt with. What is regarded as the "standard strength" is a mixture of half oxygen and half air.

The results of this treatment, it seems hardly possible to question, are in a very large proportion of cases very remarkable. It would be scarcely reasonable to expect invariable success. There are some unfortunate mortals whose bodily systems are in so thoroughly corrupt and unhealthy a condition that nothing short of the miraculous could heal them. "Nature" has no chance with them, and cannot build up sound flesh out of their unsound material. And it would seem that there are sometimes other causes of failure. But where there is any sort of constitution to work upon, the effects of this treatment look to be very surprising. Among the first experiences is the assuaging and cessation of pain. The patients find that from the time the oxygen begins to take effect pain begins to subside, and, generally speaking, within a couple of days or so it entirely dies out—assuming that the case is one amenable to its treatment. All unpleasant smells are similarly obviated, and the most frightful-looking sores and wounds soon begin to put on what surgeons recognise as the signs of healthy flesh formation. Maladies that have resisted all kinds of treatment for years, and in some cases for the greater part of a lifetime, have in the course of a few weeks or months been entirely, and it is believed permanently, healed—so at least it is claimed; and a hospital has been established in London under royal patronage for the treatment of patients upon the new method.

Seed Corn.

The supreme luxury of life is sympathetic companionship.

There are some men and women in whose company we are always at our best. While with them we cannot think mean thoughts, or speak ungenerous words. Their mere presence is elevation, purification, sanctity. All the best stops in our nature are drawn out by their intercourse, and we find music in our souls that never was there before.

Prayer is simply the union of the human spirit with the Divine.

The universe belongs to him who wills, who knows, who loves, who prays.

No one is defeated until he gives up: the point then is not to give up.

Mere existence is not living. Life is in vivid experiences.

There is an epitaph in the neighbourhood of Boston which is suggestive. The tombstone records the name and date of the death of a wife and mother, and then simply adds, "*She was so pleasant.*"

To visit pleasant people is to visit a clearer sky and a warmer climate.

The ability to read enables us to hear with the finest ears, and listen to the sweetest voices of all time.

I for one shall never be persuaded that Shakespeare left a less useful legacy to his countrymen than Watt. He who feeds the imagination does more for men than he who fills their pockets.

Whoever quarrels with the Nature of Things is certain to get the worst of it.

"Do right though the heavens fall" is an admirable precept so long as the heavens do not take you at your word and come down about your ears!

The Don Quixote of one generation may live to hear himself called the Saviour of Society by the next.

A man rich only for himself has a life as barren and cheerless as that of a serpent set to guard a buried treasure.

The measure of a nation's true success is not in the volume of its trade, nor in the power of its armies, nor in the number of its lordly houses, but in the amount it has contributed to the thought, the moral energy, the intellectual happiness, the spiritual hope and consolation of mankind.

The hero is he who takes risks; yet taking risks is not necessarily heroic.

The highest state is a tranquillity of soul in which a man loves what he commands himhimself to do.

"Every day is a fresh beginning;
Every morn is the world made new."

Friendship cannot give its gifts where they are unwelcome or unheeded. Friendship's gifts suppose two things—one to give and one capable of receiving.

"Do thy duty; that is best:
Leave unto the Lord the rest."

Life is a fine art; it is the supreme consummation of all the arts, the final finish and flower.

It is told of the Friar Jerome and the Beautiful Book how, when the monk left his work on the richly-illuminated missal to answer the call of human needs, he found on his return that an angel had stood at his desk and wrought at the task all the time he had been absent. Which is a parable of many things.

Some Words for Girls.*

One thing a girl needs is a lofty ideal to live up to. Happy the girl who comes under the influence of a noble woman. To know a woman "who looks well to the ways of her household," and also has a hospitable mind for literature, arts, or science, is a liberal education. The happy balance of interests fosters a helpful and noble character. The union of clever housewife and intellectual woman is rare; but there are signs of steady growth in this direction in the coming generation, and one may hope that women after the type of Mary Somerville and Mrs. Siddons may become the rule instead of the exception.

Too often women are one-sided—either purely domestic, or quite useless in that respect, and only developed on the intellectual side. The union of the two is the ideal for our girls. The result is a healthier, happier, and nobler woman. It is a mistake to give the whole day of every day to domestic concerns—one gets narrow and stunted by them—but it is a still more grievous mistake to neglect them altogether. Balance is wanted, and a sense of proportion. The cultivation of even one talent, or the study of one subject, has a valuable broadening effect on the mind, and opens up vistas of future possibilities.

Girls fresh from school are wearied if they have to live all day in the stifling atmosphere of details they cannot be expected to feel an engrossing interest in, to be at the beck and call of everybody, and with no recognised time of the day their own for carrying on the cultivation of any talent school life may have awakened. They are oppressed by the monotony, and lose their youthful spring and glowing interest in all life has in store for every seeker after knowledge.

To earnest-minded girls fresh from their first appreciative sip at the fountain of knowledge, life in a prosaic home soon becomes almost unbearable. The tendency to-day is to rebel, to cut all connection with domesticity, as being uninteresting and humdrum, and to go in for purely intellectual pursuits, with "gym," cycle, and hockey for necessary exercise.

* From *Stepping Stones*, by Margaret A. Robinson (Birmingham: Cornish Brothers. Price 6d.). A suggestive collection of short papers—"Stepping Stones to carry us over difficult places." The authoress deals pleasantly with such subjects as Work, Gifts, Character, etc. A capital book for girls.

It seems a sheer waste of energy, when there is so much work to do in the world, and so many tired people, for strong, able-bodied girls to take the necessary daily exercise purely as exercise, with no result to show for it beyond the healthy pleasure enjoyed in taking it—a good thing in itself.

Some of the energy might be used about the house, with much profit to the girl, and much relief to the busy mother. There would be time for study and refreshing bicycle ride as well.

Few perhaps realise what leaving school means to a girl, with its sundered interests, occupations, and daily intercourse with kindred minds. This uprooting comes at a critical time in a girl's life, when she is growing into the possession of new powers; not always a comfortable sensation. Those are happy whose parents recognise at this time the importance of giving them scope for their blossoming powers. But they are happier still, if, in addition, a love of those things which make for the comfort of home is instilled by a wise mother, who will not keep the bow bent too long, but will cherish the ideal of a wise division of the day.

News from the Field.

One of the pleasing features of the aspect of our field of work of late is the appearance among us of a considerable number of young and vigorous workers who are taking their places and giving promise of great activity.

Here are six more new men fresh from college to whom we offer greetings and good will. Mr. *G. A. Ferguson*, of *Oxford*, goes to *Kirkcaldy*; Mr. *J. P. Keene*, of *Carmarthen*, goes to *Dowlais*; and Messrs. *Eustace Thompson*, *J. F. Short*, *G. L. Phelps*, and *E. O. Jenkins*, of *Manchester*, go to *Bermondsey*, *Aberdare*, *Devonport*, and *Biglehyfadha* respectively.

As veteran-workers pass away new recruits take their places, and the good work goes cheerily on.

We are glad to note that our ranks are augmented by the coming among us of the *Rev. Robert McGee*, Congregational Minister, of *Lower Darwen*. He has had a ripe experience, has thought his way carefully into our theological position, has resigned his ministry in the Congregational Church, and is now seeking a settlement among us with the heartiest good will of all the ministers and laymen of our body with whom he has been brought into contact. He seems likely to be in every sense a gain to us. We offer him a cordial welcome.

Our friend, *Rev. J. H. Wicksteed*, who has done good work at *Padiham*, has now resigned his charge there, in order to undertake missionary work in *London*. His people will miss him greatly; but he will strengthen the hands of the workers in the Metropolis. He has done a munificent thing in leaving *Padiham* in bestowing the house in which he lived to the congregation, to be used as a parsonage.

It is satisfactory to note that summer services are again being held at *Colwyn Bay*, and that new ground is being broken up at *Windermere*, through the agency of the *Missionary Conference*.

The *Yorkshire* Sunday School Association has held a good and helpful meeting at *Leeds*. The gathering was not a numerous one, but the right spirit was present.

Our *Welsh* friends know how to rouse one another, and to kindle a fire at their meetings. It is quite an inspiration to read of their doings at the Centennial of the *Welsh* Unitarian Association, at the installation of ministers, and at all their gatherings like those commented upon by *A. G.* in the *Christian Life*. They not only hold the forts of the old churches, but they seem to be planning new enterprises at *Aberystwyth* and elsewhere. Theirs is the spirit which conquers.

At *Highgate* a new enterprise is about to be undertaken. Our friends are going to enlarge their school accommodation, and they appropriately associate it with the name of *Robert Spears*. They thus do a good work, and honour the name of a devoted missionary.

The *Southern Unitarian Association* has held its meeting at *Portsmouth*, and given proof that it shares in the new spirit of zeal which is being called forth in our churches.

The *Rev. Thomas Robinson* is giving up his ministry at *Hale*, but so accomplished and earnest a man will speedily find a sphere suited to his varied and special gifts.

But one reads with sorrow that *Professor Upton* has intimated that he will soon retire from the chair he has filled with so much distinction in *Manchester College*. Mr. *Upton's* philosophical attainments are known everywhere among scholars and thinkers, and the fruits of his teaching—following *Dr. Martineau*—are found among the most prominent teachers in our churches. He has always been a great favourite among the students, and he will be greatly missed. Doubtless his learned leisure will be turned to such account that the world will be enriched by the mature fruitage of his ripened thought.

When we think of the honoured men and women who have found their home in our churches, and who constitute a spiritual roll of honour among us, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the soil and atmosphere of our Free Churches are favourable to the noblest growth and the most beautiful life. We add to that roll the honoured names of *Israel Wade*, *Deborah Bowring*, *Frank Taylor*, and *T. W. Scott*. What a cluster of stars it is that shines over us!

Ours is but a rough and imperfect way of filling vacant pulpits. Sometimes one is inclined to sigh for a modified episcopacy. Good men, who by some passing incident or accident are without charge, are placed at painful disadvantage; while congregations wherein they could do good work, but who know nothing about these men, are groping blindly among unknown men in the hope of finding one suitable for themselves. Some outside, well-informed, and trusted agency might profitably interpose and put the right men into the right places to the advantage of all. Considering our present modes of action, the wonder is that our churches are served so well.

Aug. 20th, 1902. SCRUTATOR.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

God's Presence with us.

You have seen a beautiful sunset when the clouds were steeped in crimson, and feathers of gold lay low in the green sky along the tops of the purple hills; and perhaps you have seen a sunrise too, when hues of softest rose blushed over the silvery clouds, and the birds awoke in the green woods. We call the sun "he" when we say "He shines upon the hills," but we do not mean that the sun is a man. We also call the moon "she" when we say "She looks through the clouds," but we do not mean that the moon is a woman. So we call our Heavenly Father "He," although we do not mean that God is a great and glorious man, and yet calling Him "He" has encouraged people to think of Him as in appearance like a man. But, as I have told you, we must guard against thinking of Him in that way.

When we call God "He" and our "Heavenly Father," as Jesus did, we mean that He is loving, forgiving, wise, and great, excelling and abounding beyond measure in all good qualities of the mind, which we love in good fathers and mothers, and in all good people, and that He is the cause of all good in us and in the world; but we do not mean, and you must not think, that in shape and appearance He is like your own Father, or like anything you have ever seen. And yet we call Him our Heavenly Father, for, as I have said, He is the cause of all that is good in us. The real meaning of the word God is "Greatest of all," for we cannot think of anything greater than He, who is wisest, kindest, strongest, best, and greatest of all, and although no one has ever seen Him as Jesus was seen, yet we know Him. John, the loving disciple and cousin of Jesus, who lived with Him in Galilee, says in his life of Jesus in the Bible that no man has seen God at any time, but that Jesus has made Him known to us.

No one ever knew more of God than Jesus did, and, speaking one day to a country woman who had come out of the town to get water in her red clay jar at the well of Sycar, amid the hills of Samaria, He told her that *God is a Spirit.* And think as we may about our Heavenly Father, we cannot get beyond this simple truth which Jesus told that woman. No doubt you wonder what "Spirit" means. It means something which cannot be seen or heard or felt, but is known to us; and that is what God is. We cannot see the air, but we can feel it, and although we cannot see or feel our Heavenly Father, we know of His presence in us by Him telling us what is right for us to do. Thus, while we do not know what He looks like, or whether He is like anything that we have ever seen or thought of, we know what He *is* and *does*, and that He is good and loving above all that we can think; and this we know from his presence in us.

As I have said, our Heavenly Father is the cause of all goodness in the world, whether it be in the little black girl far away in Africa who soothes her brother's tears, and yet who never heard the name of God; or the little English boy who tells the truth, and whose mother speaks to him about his Heavenly Father every day. All our good thoughts and feelings are caused by Him, and we can tell of His presence in us by the constant guidance which we receive towards what is right. *If you are not sure of this, try it.* It is of no use to believe it if you do not try it. If we are thirsty, it is of no use to know of water: we must drink. If you wish to know, if you wish to be sure, that you have God's guidance within you, you must test it, rely on it as a rule of your life, and you will know of its simple truth.

When speaking to the crowds of people in the Golden Temple on one of the days of their great Autumn Festival of Bowers, at Jerusalem, some of the leading Judeans found fault with Jesus for what He said, and to them He replied in words like these:—*"What I say to you is not Mine own, but the will of My Father in Heaven who sent Me. If any one wishes to do His will, he shall know whether what I say is from Him, or if I speak from Myself."* And so, if we wish to be sure that our Heavenly Father makes His will known to us, to guide us in what is right for us to do, and if we really wish to obey Him, as Jesus told the people, *we must try it*, and then we shall know for ourselves that Jesus spoke the truth. And having found that we have a gentle Guide that tells us what is right to do, and checks us if we would do wrong, let us pause and ask ourselves, "How do I know what is right? Who tells me? I do not tell myself, no person tells me, and yet I know." It is some good thing, not yourself, that tells you what is right to do; some good thing which you cannot see or feel or hear, but which is known to you. It is the presence of your Heavenly Father within you, *of God, a Spirit.* And you will try again and again for a month, a year if need be, to make sure; praying for this gentle guidance, waiting for it, yielding yourself up to it. It is well worth a fair trial, *for your whole life hangs on it.*

The greatest heroes among men have done their great deeds because they believed and knew they were doing the will of God; and in the simple things of your life, like a good, obedient child, you will yield yourself up, as Jesus did, to the same perfect and loving Guide.

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